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ABSTRACT

This digest summarizes the professional standards developed by the six Regional Institutional Accrediting Bodies for accreditation of special education and related services personnel preparation programs. The accrediting bodies are: the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Commission on Colleges of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. For each of the six organizations, seven categories of information are outlined: (1) eligibility of programs for accreditation; (2) curriculum (overall institutional, core curriculum, and other special requirements); (3) relationship to the world of practice (clinical and field-based experience, follow-up of graduates, and relationship with the field); (4) students (admission, monitoring, advisory services, exit criteria, multicultural groups, and persons with disabilities); (5) faculty (qualifications, faculty load, faculty development, and faculty evaluation); (6) governance (relationship of program to institution, authority/autonomy, structure and administration, and planning); and (7) resources (personnel, fiscal, facilities, library, equipment, and supplies). (JDD)

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Digest of Standards Relating to Personnel Preparation Programs in Special Education and Related Services Issued by Regional Institutional Accrediting Bodies

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PREFACE

These two notebooks:

1. **"Digest of Standards Relating to Personnel Preparation Programs in Special Education and Related Services Issued by Regional Institutional Accrediting Bodies"**

and

2. **"Digest of Standards for the Accreditation of Personnel Preparation Programs of Nationally Recognized Special Education and Related Services Organizations"**

contain digests of the professional standards of thirteen organizations: the six Regional Institutional Accrediting Bodies and seven organizations concerned with special education and related services. These thirteen organizations have been identified by the National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education as those which have a direct bearing on the preparation of professional personnel who deliver services to children with handicaps.

After a preliminary analysis, the Clearinghouse staff developed an outline of seven major categories: Eligibility, Curriculum, Relationship to World of Practice, Students, Faculty, Governance, and Resources. Each organization standard was examined in relationship to this outline. Most items fit easily within the outline and were classified into its matrix. A few items were force-choiced into the closest item. Each standard was then cut-and-pasted into the outline format preserving original language and creating the profile or digest. Editing was limited to consistency and grammar. The profiles were sent to the respective organizations which validated and/or corrected items. The changes have been incorporated in the profiles in these books.

There is an overview sheet with each digest citing the specific name, address, and telephone number of the organization, and the title of the standards publication.

Seven Special Education and Related Services Organizations:

1. The American Occupational Therapy Association
2. American Physical Therapy Association
3. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
4. The Council for Exceptional Children
5. Council on Education of the Deaf
6. Council on Social Work Education
7. National Association of School Psychologists

Six Regional Institutional Accrediting Bodies:

1. **Middle States**
   Commission on Higher Education
   Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools

2. **New England**
   Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
   New England Association of Schools and Colleges

3. **North Central**
   Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
   North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

4. Northwest
   Commission on Colleges
   Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges

5. Southern
   Commission on Colleges
   Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

6. Western
   Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
   Western Association of Schools and Colleges

RELATED SERVICES ASSOCIATION
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS PROFILE

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- o Relationship of Program to Institution
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- o Planning

VII. RESOURCES

- o Personnel
- o Fiscal
- o Facilities
- o Library, Equipment, Supplies

NAME OF ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION:	Commission on Higher Education Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
MAILING ADDRESS:	3624 Market Street Philadelphia, PA 19104
CONTACT:	(215) 662-5606
STANDARDS PUBLICATION:	Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education: Standards for Accreditation, Copyright 1982, Revised Edition Printed April 1989.

PROFILE: MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION: Commission on Higher Education
Middle States Association of Colleges
and Schools

I. ELIGIBILITY

General

- States served: Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and some overseas locations.

To be eligible for accreditation, an institution must:

- Have a clearly stated mission, with goals and objectives consistent wih the aspirations and expectations of higher education;
- Have a charter and/or formal authorization from the appropriate governmental agency to award an academic degree;
- Have a governing board which includes a diverse membership broadly representative of the public interest. A governing board should include individuals who have no current involvement in a professional or proprietary capacity with any educational institution or organization, private or governmental, and whose services on that board can be subject in no way to current orpotential conflicts of interest or loyalty. Members representing the public interest should be numerous enough to assure that they have an effective - though not necessarily a majority - voice in the affairs of the governing body;
- Devote all, or substantially all, of its gross income to the support of its educational purposes and programs;
- Have established an adequate financial base of funding commitments, and have available an externally audited financial statement, not more than one year old;
- Have a functioning administrative and organizational structure;
- Offer, or plan to offer, one or more postsecondary degree-granting educational programs equivalent to at least one academic year in length, with clearly defined and published objectives and a statement of the means for achieving them;
- Require, in addition to study of the areas of specialization proper to its principle educational programs, some work in liberal arts and sciences, either as a prerequisite to or as clearly defined elements in those programs;

- Have admission policies compatible with stated institutional objectives. Beyond these bare minima, an institution must be able to demonstrate its compliance with the Standards for Middle States Accredtation and the extent to which its endeavors incorporate and relflect the Characteristics of Excellence.

Relationship Between Accreditation and Certification

- The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools does not issue certification to individuals.

II. CURRICULUM

Overall Institutional

- An institution's educational program is actually far broader than its curricula. It includes the total range of influences which an institution brings to bear upon its students or which incidentally impinge upon them. In this sense it includes not only the courses of study and what goes on in the classrooms, laboratories, studios, and the library, but also the effects of counseling, student activities, athletics, lectures and exhibitions; and in informal student and faculty contacts in lounges, cafeterias, dining rooms, and dormitories.

- Educational institutions propose to introduce students to a body of knowledge, to increase their interest in intellectual matters, to enrich their cultural lives, to help them develop powers of discrimination and judgment, to foster their commitment to ethical, intellectual, social, and perhaps religious values, and to encourage the pursuit of lifelong learning. These are basic essentials of higher education and should be expressed in suitable terms and proportions in statements of institutional mission and goals.

- A statement of institutional goals is a description of the specific intentions of the educational programs and the effects they are designed to have. These should include encouragement of a sense of responsibility in students for their own development and an awareness of their potential as contributing members of the institution and ultimately of society.

- Course and curricular objectives ought to be more precise and geared directly to particular learning and understanding. Course objectives should be designed not only with respect to content, but with regard to developing techniques and skills which facilitate further learning, e.g., in the laboratory and in independent study.

- The general education sequence should be designed for the distinctive contribution it can make to the total intellectual growth of each student.

- Courses included in general education should be those which can best fulfill an institution's aims for students, which draw them into important new areas of intellectual experience, increase awareness of their cultural heritage as well as that of others, and prepare them to make sound judgments outside as well as within their specialized field. A general education program permits the literature student to learn about the cosmos and computers; business and technology students to learn about the humanities and social sciences; and all students to become more aware of the interrelationships of knowledge and the interdependence of the human community.

- The test of the individual program in this large sense is the skill with which each aspect of it is molded and used explicitly to foster the achievement of institutional goals, and the extent to which these influences, taken as a whole, can be expected to lead students to attain the institution's aims for them.

- There must always be a sensible and demonstrable relationship between stated goals and objectives and the actual program.

- The curriculum for graduate study should provide for the scope of research and stimulation of independent thinking which work on the graduate level presupposes and develops.

Specialist Courses (Core Curriculum)

- No provision stated.

Other Special Requirements

- Activities such as student government, intramural and collegiate athletics, cultural and social affairs, and others are supplements to the formal instructional program. They should reflect student interests and student-faculty cooperation; they should be integral parts of and contribute directly to the effectiveness of the total educational program.

- An academic institution is in an especially advantageous position to include community services as an integral part of its program, consistent with its goals and objectives.

- Professional usefulness may be one basis on which courses are selected, but general education components should not be limited to courses which develop communication and computation skills.

III. RELATIONSHIP TO WORLD OF PRACTICE

Clinical and Field Based Experience

- No provision stated.

Follow-up of Graduates

- o Institutions should make frequent appraisals of the records of their graduates in education beyond the two or four-year college level, survey alumni opinions, and solicit reports from employers.

- o A plan for the measurement of educational outcomes may well include but should not be limited to:

  - A a multi-demensional evaluation of undergraduate scholastic achievement, taking the form of comparison of scores in standardized tests with the results of placement examinations taken at entrance;

  - A study of the performance of graduates in senior colleges or in graduate and professional schools;

  - Long-term study of the achievements, both vocational and avocational, of the alumni based on data gathered periodically and systematically;

  - An intensive study of one class from entrance through graduation and beyond.

  All of these may be a regular function of an internal institutional research program.

Relationship with Field

- o No provision stated.

IV. STUDENTS

Admission

- o Every institution needs a carefully planned admissions program appropriate to the aims of the institution and of a particular program, and to the needs of the students.

- o The policy must be clearly stated and related to the goals and resources of the institution. In all cases, there should be a demonstrable correlation between admissions policies and educational practices. Procedures should place students in courses and programs in which their fundamental academic skills assure a reasonable probability of success at a level commensurate to the institution's expectations.

- o A sound admissions program also provides comprehensive and realistic information about charges, fees, and the availability of financial

aid. Criteria for awarding scholarships and fellowships, the nature and implications of grants and loans, and any conditions attached to financial aid should be clearly stipulated. The institution's explicit policy with respect to refunds of tuition, room and board, and other payments should also be generally available.

Monitoring - Assessment/Competencies

- Efforts should be undertaken to assess student achievement in general as well as in specialized areas of the curriculum, on an inclusive as well as course-by-course basis, and when possible in comparison with student achievement elsewhere.

- Any admissions policy has special ramifications requiring continuous follow-up studies to determine whether it is serving the needs and interests of its students or how it could be doing so more effectively.

Advisory Services

- All institutions should give careful thought to placement services for students. All students, not only those in technical, professional, or para-professional curricula, need to know about job opportunities, licensing and certification requirements, and many other kinds of information. Counseling is essential to any sound placement program, and it should be an integral part of the overall student personnel services.

- Selection and support of students require a well organized student personnel program extending from recruitment to placement after graduation and alumni organization. A program of student services should be concerned with advisement, tutoring, counseling, financial aid discipline, health, government, cultural, athletic and non-athletic activities, and student-faculty-administration relationships. The services provided should be appropriate to the needs, maturity and degree level of the students enrolled.

Completion of Program/Evaluation - Exit Criteria

- No provision stated.

Multicultural Groups and Persons with Disabilities

- Courses included in general education should be those which can best fulfill an institution's aims for students, which draw them into important new areas of intellectual experience, increase awareness of their cultural heritage as well as that of others, and prepare them to make sound judgments outside as well as within their specialized field. A general education program permits the literature student to learn about the cosmos and computers; business

and technology students to learn about the humanities and social sciences; and all students to become more aware of the interrelationships of knowledge and the interdependence of the human community.

V. FACULTY

The primary responsibility of the teaching faculty is to supply the instruction necessary to make the curriculum effective.

Qualification/Assignment

- Selection is based on examination of academic records, confidential inquiries regarding the applicant's professional qualifications, and personal interviews.

- Educational institutions have a responsibility to develop non-discriminatory selection and promotion standards and procedures based on principles of fairness which consider qualities, aptitudes, or talents simply as they pertain to the requirements of the position, with due regard for the rights of all qualified persons.

Faculty Load

- No provision stated.

Faculty Development

- Allowance of time to devote to professional advancement and development and the encouragement to do so through provision of appropriate incentives are characteristics of enlightened faculty policies. Criteria for the appointment of part-time or adjunct faculty and their supervision should be comparable to those for full-time faculty, as should provisions for review of teaching effectiveness and opportunities for professional development and participation.

Faculty Evaluation

- Carefully articulated and equitable procedures for periodic faculty evaluation can contribute significantly to sustaining the highest level of professional excellence.

VI. GOVERNANCE

Relationship of Program to Institution

- No provision stated.

Authority/Autonomy

- No provision stated.

Structure and Administration

- Effective organization depends on carefully developed by-laws or a constitution, defining clearly the responsibilities of the governing board, the president or otherwise designated chief administrative officer, the dean and other officers, the faculty, and essential committees.

- The governing board is expected to serve the public interest by accepting legal responsibility for seeing that the institution is what it is intended to be, that it fulfills the announced mission and goals and ensures its continuity. To this end, a board appoints a chief executive officer to direct its operation, develops policy, provides advice on major issues, and strives to conserve, develop and enhance the institution's resources. The board, operating always as a collective body, is entrusted with stewardship of the institution's property and assets, but more importantly, it is charged with upholding the institution's reason for being, its educational mission.

- The governing board of an institution must approve the institution's annual budget, which reflects the institution's plans in financial terms. The board bears legal responsibility for the institution's integrity and quality.

- Boards necessarily deal with many matters such as:

  - Approving introduction or deletion of curricula;
  - Confirming appointment of major academic and administrative officers;
  - Establishing personnel policies and procedures;
  - Setting salary schedules;
  - Conducting or directing the conduct of collective bargaining negotiations;
  - Encouraging research;
  - Overseeing intercollegiate athletics;
  - Approving statues and by-laws; and
  - Being responsible for the institution's legal affairs.

They receive through the president periodic reports of committees, auditors, and staff; they approve the awarding of degrees. Above all, it is the responsibility of a board to ensure continuous institutional assessment and planning.

- The president is responsible to the board for leadership in developing and implementing an institution's plans, staffing and maintaining its organization, effectively using the support accorded by the board, and directing the institution toward the attainment of its goals and objectives. The president's role is to enlist, maintain, and lead the professional staff, and to represent the institution before the public, which includes helping the board to raise financial and other support.

Planning

- The nature and quality of institutional planning - both short and long-range - are among the basic indicators of sound administration. Planning activities are useful means of involving appropriate constituencies in the ongoing development of an institution - students, faculty, administrators, trustees, alumni, advisory committees of interested citizens.

- The curricula should be under constant evaluation, with modifications being made as changes in the educational situation or perceived societal needs may required. Provisions for this evaluation and the planning which parallel it are essential.

- Financial stability is a fundamental aspect of the integrity of an institution, and both long-range and short-range financial planning are absolute necessities. The institution, through its governing body, must ensure that programs offered can be supported by the necessary fiscal resources.

VII. RESOURCES

Personnel

- Educational institutions should contain within their environment the essence of the qualities they endeavor to impart, including the essential of nondiscrimination. They have a responsibility to develop selection and promotion standards and procedures based on principles of fairness which consider qualities, aptitudes, or talents simply as they pertain to the requirements of the position, with due regard for the rights of all qualified persons.

- The administrative staff is the executive agency of the institution's plans and operations. The competence of an individual member of the administrative staff is measured by ability to organize, direct, and accomplish officially assigned duties. This

will entail not only aptitude for and interest in the work, but also initiative and creativity along with related training experience. It will also require a personality capable of working smoothly with students and colleagues and of dealing harmoniously with persons outside the institution.

- Proper management and use of the institution's plant, equipment, materials and fiscal resources require qualified personnel, with particular attention to the professional training and experience of business and financial officers, laboratory specialists, heads of maintenance and security, and directors of auxiliary enterprises. Working conditions and compensation for operational staff should be in line with those prevailing locally in similar institutions.

- Librarians and other resource center staff must demonstrate their competence using criteria comparable to those for other faculty and staff; and in order to facilitate optimum functioning, be given status and privileges commensurate with their positions.

Fiscal

- A standard educational institution accounting and auditing system is imperative. An external independent audit should be conducted annually on a scheduled basis and reviewed by the governing board.

- The budget is based on complete estimates of income and expenditure, checked for accuracy and considered by the appropriate committee in terms of institutional resources, needs, plans, and priorities. The budget when complete is presented by the president to the governing board for its consideration and action.

Facilities

- Other resources denote the tangible support of the instructional program. These include funds, campus, instructional buildings, laboratories, computers, athletics plant, student activity buildings, residences, instructional materials, laboratory and shop equipment, audio-visual aids, television centers.

- An institutional development plan should be based on a working definition of the term "adequate resources" as it applies to plant, equipment, materials and money to support the work of instruction for its particular student body.

Library, Equipment, Supplies

- The library/learning resources center is of paramount importance to the students and faculty. Books and materials must relate realistically to the institution's educational mission, goals, curricula, size, complexity and degree level, and the diversity of its teaching, learning, and research requirements.

- The extent of a library/learning resources center's holdings must be in reasonable proportion to the needs to be served.

- A library/learning resources center needs to reveal the general scope of the learned and creative world, fostering broad interests among its users by surrounding them with basic interpretive books and periodicals, journals, nonprint materials, and standard reference works in the general fields of learning. They must encourage cultural breadth and intellectual depth as well as practical competence, and there should be some provision for recreational reading matter. The increasing availability of cultural and specialized information on tape, records, and film should be drawn upon in developing the strength and quality of the library/learning resources center, and cooperative arrangements with networks and neighboring libraries are encouraged as means of greatly enhancing an institution's resources.

NAME OF ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION:	Commission on Institutions of Higher Education New England Association of Schools and Colleges
MAILING ADDRESS:	The Sanborn House 15 High Street Winchester, MA 01890
CONTACT:	(617) 729-6762
STANDARDS PUBLICATION:	Accreditation Handbook (1983)

PROFILE: NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION: Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
New England Association of Schools and Colleges

I. ELIGIBILITY

General

- States served: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

- Institutional improvement is encouraged by the requirement that the accredited institution conduct periodic self-evaluations seeking to identify what it does well, determine the areas in which improvement is needed, and develop plans to address needed improvements.

- The Commission's Criteria for Accreditation consist of two distinct sets of measures against which institutions are evaluated, the Requirements of Affiliation and the Standards for Accreditation. To receive and maintain accreditation, institutions must demonstrate through the Commission's evaluative processes that they meet both elements of the criteria.

- The Requirements of Affiliation - To be affiliated with the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, as either a candidate or an accredited institution, an institution of higher education must meet the following requirements:

  The institution:

  (1) has formally adopted a statement of mission, which demonstrates that the fundamental purposes of the institution are educational, and which is also appropriate to a degree-granting institution, and appropriate to those needs of society it seeks to serve;

  (2) offers one or more educational programs, at least one year in length and consistent with its mission;

  (3) has students enrolled in and pursuing its principle educational programs at the time of the Commission's evaluation;

  (4) awards the bachelor's, master's, or doctor's degree or, if it grants only the associate's degree, includes programs leading to degrees in liberal arts or general studies;

(5) has, for each of its educational programs, clearly defined and published objectives appropriate to higher education in level, standards, and quality, as well as the means for achieving them, including a designated course of studies acceptable for meeting degree requirements, adequate guidance to degree candidates in the satisfaction of requirements, and adequate grading or evaluating procedures;

(6) in addition to study of the areas of specialization proper to its principle educational programs, requires a coherent and substantive program of liberal studies at the postsecondary level, as either a prerequisite to or a clearly defined element in those programs;

(7) has adopted a statement specifying the potential students it wishes to serve, and admits qualified students to its programs under admission policies consistent with this statement and appropriate to those programs;

(8) awards only degrees appropriate to each graduate's level of attainment;

(9) has available to students and the public a current and accurate catalog or comparable official publication setting forth purposes and objectives, entrance requirements and procedures, rules and regulations for student conduct, programs and courses, degree completion requirements, full-time and part-time faculty and degrees held, costs, refunds, and other items related to attending or withdrawing from the institution;

(10) has a charter and/or other formal authority from the appropriate governmental agency authorizing it to grant all degrees it awards, has the necessary operating authority for each jurisdiction in which it conducts activities, and is operating within its authority;

(11) has a governing board that includes representation reflecting the public interest and that has the authority to carry out the mission of the institution;

(12) has a chief executive officer whose full-time or major responsibility is to the institution and who possesses the requisite authority;

(13) devotes all or substantially all, of its gross income to the support of its educational purposes and programs;

(14) documents a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to carry out its stated purposes;

(15) has financial records that relate clearly to the institution's educational activities and has these records externally audited on a regular schedule by an independent certified public accountant or a state audit agency;

(16) has graduated at least one class in its principle educational programs before the Commission's evaluation for accredited status. If the institution has graduated its first class not more than one year before the Commission's evaluation, the effective date of accreditation will be the date of graduation of that first class.

- o Meeting the Requirements of Affiliation does not result in accreditation or candidacy. To be a candidate, an institution must be granted "Candidate for Accreditation" status. An applicant institution must demonstrate that it:
  - Meets the Requirements of Affiliation;
  - Has, with the intention of meeting the Commission's Standards for Accreditation, effectively organized sufficient human, financial, learning, and physical resources into educational and other activities so that it is accomplishing its immediate educational purposes;
  - Has established and is following realistic plans to acquire, organize, and appropriately apply any additional resources needed to comply with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation within the candidacy period; and
  - Meets the Commission's standard on Ethical Practices.
- o To be accredited an institution must also be successfully evaluated against the Commission's qualitative criteria for the measurement of institutional effectiveness, the Standards of Accreditation.
- o An institution must define its mission and develop a clear, concise, and realistic statement of objectives. Mission and objectives are acceptable as a basis for institutional affiliation only if they are within the general scope of higher education, are appropriate for the educational role of the particular institution, and are implemented in a manner that complies with the standards established by the Commission. Furthermore, the mission and objectives of the institution must be consistent with its charter and/or other operating authority.
- o Its mission and objectives should give direction to all of the institution's educational activities and to its admission policies, selection of faculty, allocation of resources, and overall planning. It should result in reasoned choices among potential activities.

- Within a program of ongoing self-study, the statement of mission and objectives should be periodically reappraised to ensure that it provides an accurate portrayal of the institution and describes goals that are attainable to a reasonable degree. The institution should regularly assess the fulfillment of its mission and objectives by undertaking studies of the institution's impact on students and graduates. To the greatest extent possible, the institution should endeavor to describe explicit achievements expected of its students and to adopt reliable procedures for assessing those achievements.

- Publications, advertising, and other communications of information concerning the institution's programs, services, activities, and personnel should emphasize the institution's educational opportunities and should represent them in language that is accurate, clear, and unambiguous.

- The institution's catalog should include:

  - its statement of objectives;
  - its admission and transfer-credit policies;
  - an accurate description of each academic program and course of studies;
  - the requirements for a degree or other form of academic recognition;
  - the members of the instruction staff together with their academic qualifications;
  - the schedule of fees and charges, the institution's refund policy;
  - a description of learning and physical resources; and,
  - other information that the institution considers significant.

- Programs, courses, services, and personnel not available during a given academic year should be clearly identified.

Relationship Between Accreditation and Certification

- The New England Association of Schools and Colleges does not certify individuals.

II. CURRICULUM

Overall Institutional

- The institution should offer programs of study that are consistent with its statement of objectives, appropriate to an institution of higher education, adequately supported, and accurately described in its catalog.

- An undergraduate program, whether general, specialized, or professional, should show an appropriate regard for the humanities, the natural sciences, and the social sciences, by ensuring that at least a quarter of the student's program consists of courses from these three areas.

- A baccalaureate program should include a commitment to a particular area of inquiry and should afford competence in that area beyond introductory levels.

- A graduate level program should provide for advanced levels of scholarship and competence in the area of specialization.

- Each program should contribute to the personal growth of students by helping them to develop responsible, independent judgment, to weigh values, and to understand fundamental theory.

- The instruction of students should be the central focus of the resources and services of the institution. Methods of instruction should vary with the discipline to be taught and with the abilities and experience of the students. Responsible experimentation should be encouraged, and the institution should stimulate and assist the faculty to achieve a high quality of instruction.

- Clearly identified institutional standards of scholarship, appropriate to each level of instruction, should be applied consistently and rigorously in each course of studies.

- Research activity by faculty and students should be governed by institutional policies that ensure consonance with the objectives of the institution, adequate administrative controls, freedom of investigation by the researcher, and proper health and safety provisions.

Specialist Courses (Core Curriculum)

- Each academic program should be consistent with, and clearly related to, the objectives of the institution. Whereas institutional goals are generally framed in broad terms, these objectives ought to be more precise and geared directly to particular learning and understanding.

Other Special Requirements

- Where programs in continuing education and special instructional activities are offered, on- or off-campus, they should be integral components of the institution's total commitment. Provisions for such activities should include an adequate administrative organization, a competent faculty, a sound financial base, and appropriate facilities.

- Every program offered should be supported by sufficient institutional resources.

III. RELATIONSHIP TO WORLD OF PRACTICE

Clinical and Field Based Experience

- No provision stated.

Follow-up of Graduates

- Current information about graduates and their progress in careers should be maintained. The interest of alumni in institutional development should be encouraged.

Relationship with Field

- No provision stated.

IV. STUDENTS

Admission

- The institution should have an orderly and ethical program of admission, based on the appraisal of the prospective student's intellectual and personal qualifications in relation to the institution's objectives and educational program. It should comply with the requirements of equal opportunity and affirmative action legislation.

Monitoring - Assessment/Competencies

- (See items under "Advisory Services" which follows.)

Advisory Services

- The institution should provide student services that support institutional objectives and assist students to achieve academic and personal growth while making progress toward their career goals.

- Adequate counseling services and current information about financial assistance and career placement should be available to all students.

- A formal program of student counseling (academic, personal, and career) should be available and appropriately publicized to the students. In cases of special need - for example, foreign students, the culturally disadvantaged, the handicapped, veterans - additional services should be provided.

- Services for part-time students, on or off campus should be equal to those provided for full-time students.

Completion of Program/Evaluation - Exit Criteria

- No provision stated.

Multicultural Groups and Persons with Disabilities

- The institution shall comply with requirements of equal opportunity and affirmative action legislation.

V. FACULTY

Qualification/Assignment

- The recruitment, appointment, promotion, and retention of well-qualified faculty members are matters of major importance. The policies and procedures to be followed in these activities should be clearly stated in institutional documents, and due attention should be given to pertinent legal requirements in the areas of nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and affirmative action employment practices.

- The preparation and qualifications of all members of the instructional staff should be suited to the field and level of their assignments. Those in the conventional academic fields should hold advanced degrees or present evidence of scholarship or creative achievement appropriate to their positions; those in professional or technical fields should have equally appropriate preparation and attainments.

- The institution should ensure that part-time faculty meet the same criteria for appointment and retention as their full-time counterparts.

Faculty Load

- No provision stated.

Faculty Development

- Both the governing board and the administrative staff should give active support to the development of an instructional staff of high quality.

- Academic and other professional assignments should allow the faculty member time for adequate preparation, for attention to the academic needs of students, and for continuing professional growth.

Faculty Evaluation

- The criteria used to evaluate faculty performance should be known and accepted by both the evaluating officials and the faculty.

- All areas of major concern, together with the persons who serve in them, should be evaluated periodically to determine their effectiveness in fulfilling institutional objectives.

- Effective faculty performance requires a climate of reasonable security. The institution, therefore, should provide the faculty member with an adequate salary, a well planned program of benefits periodically reexamined to keep it current with changing economic conditions, and a form of contractual security or faculty tenure.

VI GOVERNANCE

Relationship of Program to Institution

- The institution should administer special activities (non-credit, and non-student service activities) within its organizational structure and ensure that they do not compete unduly for resources needed for its other programs and services.

Authority/Autonomy

- (See "Structure and Administration" which follows.)

Structure and Administration

- The authority and responsibilities of each organizational component of the institution (governing board, administrative officers, faculty, students, and other significant constituencies), together with the processes by which they function and interrelate, should be clearly described by means of a constitution or by-laws or some equivalent means. Provisions for the distribution of authority and responsibility should be depicted in a table of organization that represents the actual working order of the institution.

- The governing board is the legally constituted body that holds the property and assets of the institution in trust. It is responsible for sustaining the institution and its objectives; it should exercise ultimate and general control over its affairs, and provide adequate representation of the public interest.

- The primary task of the president and administrative staff is educational leadership competent to establish conditions that provide good learning opportunities for students, good working conditions for faculty and staff, and good communication processes both inside and outside the institution. Their second, but no less important, task is the management of resources in support of institutional objectives.

- The faculty should have a major role in developing and conducting the academic program and in maintaining the standards and conditions which pertain directly to instruction and research. Faculty committees, whether statutory or ad hoc, are ordinarily essential to the smooth operation of an institution.

- Within the policies established by the governing board, provision should be made for the consideration of student views and judgments in those matters in which students have a direct and reasonable interest.

Planning

- The institution should have effective mechanisms for systematic self-evaluation and planning.

- The institution should have a structure to review its objectives and to plan for the future. On the basis of current information, including that derived from evaluation processes, the institution should examine proposals to strengthen itself and to prepare itself to meet changing circumstances. Planning should be a continuing, consistent, thorough, and objective process, receiving the support necessary to make it effective.

- The institution's resources should be sufficient to carry out its objectives and adequately support its programs and activities, now and in the foreseeable future.

VII. RESOURCES

Personnel

- The library collection should be administered by a professionally qualified and numerically adequate staff.

Fiscal

- The institution should be financially stable. Its resources should be sufficient to carry out its objectives and adequately support its programs and activities, now and in the foreseeable future.

- The process by which the institution's budget is established, and resources allocated, should be clearly defined and consistently implemented.

- Financial resources should be managed prudently, economically, and with due regard for legal and contractual requirements. An external audit of financial resources and transactions should be performed annually and reviewed by the appropriate individuals or responsible groups within the institution.

- Financial statements, audits, and other reports of the fiscal condition of the institution should employ, whenever possible, a format in customary use among institutions of higher education.

- It should have control of its financial resources and budgetary process and be free from undue influence or pressure from external funding sources or agencies.

Facilities

- The physical plant - buildings, grounds, and equipment - should be adequate to support the objectives of the institution and to meet the needs of students. It should be well maintained and conform to applicable legal requirements, especially those concerned with access, safety, and health.

- Classrooms, laboratories, and other areas for instruction should be properly equipped and adequate in number and size.

- The institution should provide those learning resources necessary to support the educational program and the intellectual and cultural development of faculty and students.

Library, Equipment, Supplies

- The institution should have its own library or collection of learning resources. Collections of print and nonprint materials should be appropriate to the range and complexity of the educational program, to each curriculum of studies, and to student enrollment. Materials should be housed in convenient locations and readily accessible to students.

NAME OF ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION:	Commission on Institutions of Higher Education North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
MAILING ADDRESS:	159 North Dearborn Street Chicago, IL 60601
CONTACT:	(312) 263-0456 (800) 621-7441
STANDARDS PUBLICATION:	A Handbook of Accreditation 1988-89

PROFILE: NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION: Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

I. ELIGIBILITY

General

- States served: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado,, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming - and the American Dependents' Schools operated overseas for the children of American military and civilian personnel.

- Its day-to-day operations are conducted by its two Commissions:

  - The Commission on Schools, located in Boulder, Colorado, which accredits institutions below the postsecondary level; and,

  - The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, in Chicago, Illinois, which accredits postsecondary institutions.

  (NOTE: This digest only focuses on postsecondary institutions.) The Commission has been recognized by the Council of Postsecondary Association (COPA) since COPA's founding in 1975. The most recent review of the Commission by COPA was conducted in 1985.

- Affiliation with the Association and the Commission is voluntary, and an institution may resign its affiliation at any time.

- Candidacy is a preaccreditation status and, unlike accredited status, does not carry with it membership in the Commission and the Association. Candidacy indicates that an institution meets the Commission's General Institutional Requirements (GIRs) and Evaluative Criteria for Candidacy and is progressing toward accreditation; it does not automatically assure eventual accreditation. Candidacy provides an institution with the opportunity to establish a formal, publicly-recognized relationship with the Association, and is the recommended approach to seeking accreditation for most non-affiliated institutions.

- An institution achieves candidacy status after the Commission has determined that it meets the GIRs and the Evaluative Criteria for Candidacy. An institution being evaluated for candidacy must have students actively pursuing its programs at the time of the team visit. An institution continues its candidacy for a fixed period of time - usually no longer than six years. An institution holding candidacy may request that it be evaluated for accreditation -

rather than continued candidacy - whenever it believes that it can demonstrate that it meets the Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation. Since candidacy is not a prerequisite to accreditation, an institution applying for initial affiliation with the Commission may choose to seek either status.

- o The institution publishes in its catalog or other appropriate places accurate information that fairly describes:
  - Its educational programs;
  - Its policies and procedures directly affecting students;
  - Its charges and its refund policies; and
  - The academic credentials of its faculty members and administrators.

Relationship Between Accreditation and Certification

- o The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools does not certify individuals.

II. CURRICULUM

Overall Institutional

- o The institution has formally adopted and made public its statement of mission.
- o The state of mission is appropriate to an institution of higher education.
- o The institution confers certificates, diplomas or degrees.
- o The institution has legal authority to confer its certificates, diplomas and degrees.
- o The institution meets all legal requirements to operate wherever it conducts activities.
- o At least one of the undergraduate programs is two or more academic years in length (or the equivalent). If no undergraduate programs are offered, at least one of the graduate programs is one or more academic years in length (or the equivalent).
- o General education at the postsecondary level is an essential element of undergraduate degree programs and a prerequisite to graduate degree programs.

- o General education and/or a program of related instruction at the postsecondary level is an essential element of undergraduate certificate and diploma programs two or more academic years in length.

- o The certificate, diploma or degree awarded upon successful completion of an educational program is appropriate to the demonstrated attainment of the graduate.

Specialist Courses (Core Curriculum)

- o The educational programs are compatible with the institution's mission.

- o The principle educational programs are based on recognized fields of study at the postsecondary level.

Other Special Requirements

- o No provisions stated.

III RELATIONSHIP TO WORLD OF PRACTICE

Clinical and Field Based Experience

- o No provisions stated.

Follow-up of Graduates

- o No provisions stated.

Relationship with Field

- o No provisions stated.

IV. STUDENTS

Admission

- o Admissions policies are consistent with the institution's mission and appropriate to the educational programs.

- o Admissions practices conform to the admissions policies.

Monitoring - Assessment/Competencies

- o No provisions stated.

Advisory Services

- o No provisions stated.

Completion of Program/Evaluation - Exit Criteria

- No provisions stated.

IV. FACULTY

Qualification/Assignment

- A faculty comprising persons qualified by education and experience is significantly involved in the development and review of the educational programs.

Faculty Load

- No provisions stated.

Faculty Development

- No provisions stated.

Faculty Evaluation

- No provisions stated.

VI. GOVERNANCE

Relationship of Program to Institution

- No provisions stated.

Authority/Autonomy

- No provisions stated.

Structure and Administration

- There is a governing board, legally responsible for the institution, which establishes and regularly reviews basic policies that govern the institution and protects its integrity.
- The governing board includes individuals who represent the public interest. (Note: In rare situations the Commission may approve alternative means by which the interests of the public are appropriately represented when unusual circumstances prohibit public representatives on the board.)
- An executive officer is designated by the governing board to administer the institution.

- The institution has effectively organized adequate human, financial and physical resources into educational and other programs to accomplish its purposes.

Planning

- No provisions stated.

VII. RESOURCES

Personnel

- No provisions stated.

Fiscal

- The institution has financial resources sufficient to support its activities.
- The institution has its financial statements externally audited on a regular schedule by a certified public accountant or state audit agency.
- The institution makes available upon request accurate information that fairly describes its financial resources.

Facilities

- No provisions stated.

Library, Equipment, Supplies

- No provision stated.

NAME OF ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION:	Commission on Colleges Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges
MAILING ADDRESS:	3700-B University Way, N.E. Seattle, WA 98105
CONTACT:	(206) 543-0195
STANDARDS PUBLICATION:	Standards (June 1988)

PROFILE: **NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION** : Commission on Colleges
Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges

I. ELIGIBILITY

General

- States served: Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington.

- The Candidate for Accreditation program must offer developing postsecondary institutions the opportunity to establish a formal, publicly recognized relationship with the Commission on Colleges. Operating, nonaccreditated higher institutions that meet the basic eligibility requirements for the Commission may apply. Candidate for Accreditation is an affiliated, nonaccredited relationship with the Commission. Only accredited institutions are members of the Association. Candidacy indicates that an institution is progressing toward accreditation. Attainment of the affiliate status does not assure accreditation.

- An institution accredited by the Commission on Colleges must have defined its mission and have a clear, concise, and realistic statement of objectives. Mission and objectives are acceptable as a basis for accreditation by the Commission, however, only if they are within the scope of postsecondary education as described in the eligibility requirements, are implemented in a manner which complies with the standards established by the Commission, and are consistent with the institution's charter or other operating authority.

- The institution's statement of mission should result from the efforts of both faculty and administration and must be approved by the governing board.

- The institution should regularly assess the fulfillment of its mission and objectives by undertaking studies of its impact on students and graduates.

Relationship Between Accreditation and Certification

- The Western Association of Schools and Colleges does not certify individuals.

II. CURRICULUM

Overall Institutional

- The educational program in general and that of each instructional unit must be clearly related to the mission and objectives of the institution, and to the degrees or certificates which it awards. The curricular offerings of an institution should be clearly and accurately described in published materials.

- Instructional techniques and policies should express the mission and objectives of the institution as well as the specific objectives of an individual course.

- Where continuing education and other special instructional activities exist, including public service functions, they should be integral components of the institution's total commitment.

Relationship Between Accreditation and Certification

- The Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges does not certify individuals.

Specialist Courses (Core Curriculum)

- An institution inaugurating, continuing, or expanding an external or special degree program should develop specific policies and guidelines which include admission policies with special attention to the age and maturity of the students, to their educational achievement, to their vocational and avocational experiences, and to their goals and objectives. Guidelines concerning transfer of credit, credit by examination (e.g., College Level Examination Program of the College Entrance Examination Board and the institution's own examinations), credit for experiential learning, credit for prior learning, and residency requirements (periodic seminars and special sessions), if any, need to be established.

  Methods of evaluating a student's progress, including advising and counseling, should be explicit. Evaluation and examination procedures which determine that the individual has successfully completed the degree requirements must be clearly outlined and fully developed.

Other Special Requirements

- Emphasis in most continuing education activities is placed on serving the postsecondary needs of adults who are unable to participate on a full-time basis. The following activities should be reviewed:

External Degree Program
Off-Campus Classes
Extension Programs
Non-Credit Programs
Off-Campus Centers
Special Evening Programs
Summer Sessions
Special Lecture Series
Media Instruction
Study Abroad
Foreign and Domestic Travel Study
Experimental Learning Formats for Adults
Independent Study through Correspondence/Telecommunications
In-Service and Relicensure, Certificate and Credential Programs
Community Service Programs (Museums, Performing Arts Centers)
Testing and Evaluation Procedures for Granting Degree Credit
Workshops, Short Courses, Conferences and Institutes

III. RELATIONSHIP TO WORLD OF PRACTICE

Clinical and Field Based Experience

- Credit may not be granted for experiential learning that occurs prior to students' matriculation into the graduate degree program. Unless a graduate faculty member structures the learning experience, assesses the amount of time devoted to the learning by the student, and monitors the experience, no graduate credit should be granted.

Follow-up of Graduates

- In order to determine the effectiveness of the offerings, adequate evaluation and follow-up of the students participating in these programs should be made.

- An institution has an obligation to assist students in securing part-time employment on-campus, off-campus during the school term and the summer, as well as for appropriate employment of graduates. It has the further obligation to maintain continuing contact with prospective employers in those professions and other occupations for which it offers preparation.

- Every institution should keep current and accurate records of the names, addresses, occupations, and accomplishments of alumni.

Relationship with Field

- No provisions stated.

IV. STUDENTS

Admission

- The admissions policy of an institution should be the responsibility of the faculty, the administration, and the governing board. It

should be clearly expressed and openly published. The individual (usually the Director of Admissions) or agency responsible for administering this policy should be clearly identified.

- The admission requirements should be related to the mission and objectives of the institution.

- The institution should have a well-defined and clearly expressed admission policy, so related to its educational purposes that it insures the admission of those students who benefit from its educational program.

- Faculty members responsible for instruction in graduate programs are to be involved in setting the admission criteria. Provision should be made for special criteria for particular programs in addition to those for general admission.

- Sufficiently high requirements for admission to graduate study are necessary to ensure that students will be able to fulfill the objectives and standards of graduate programs. Flexibility must also exist in order to accept students interested in any of the several functions of the graduate program, whether it be specialization for professional work, breadth as well as depth for teaching, or competence in research.

Monitoring - Assessment/Competencies

- An institution should have and express a continuing concern for the total welfare of each student, including his/her physical and mental health, development of capabilities and talents, establishment of relationships with other persons, and motivation for progress in intellectual understanding.

- Every collegiate institution should make use of educational and psychological tests to evaluate the capabilities and interests of the student.

- To the greatest extent possible, the institution should endeavor to describe explicit achievements expected of its students and to adopt reliable procedures for assessing those achievements. In order to determine the effectiveness of the continuing education and special instructional activities, adequate evaluation and follow-up of the students participating in these programs should be made.

Advisory Services

- Capable counselors and advisers should be readily available in reference to academic, personal and vocational problems of the student.

- o Collegiate institutions need to assist students in meeting the faculty's requirements for graduation through advisement by members of the faculty.

Completion of Program/Evaluation - Exit Criteria

- o Graduation requirements for graduate degrees offered by an institution are to be determined by the graduate faculty or its appropriate representative body. Policies governing these requirements must include the following:
  - The specified time period in which the degree must be completed;
  - The number of credit hours that must be completed with the degree-granting institution, normally at least two-thirds of those required for the degree;
  - The minimum number of graduate level credits, at least 50% of those required for the degree;
  - For the master's degree, a minimum of one academic year of full-time study or its equivalent, with a minimum of 24 semester or 36 quarter hours;
  - The number of graded credit hours that must be earned for the degree;
  - The minimum acceptable grade point average, normally a B or its equivalent;
  - The types of qualifying and exit examinations which the candidate must pass;
  - The proficiency requirements the candidate must satisfy; and
  - The thesis, dissertation, writing or research requirement which the candidate must satisfy.

Multicultural Groups and Persons with Disabilities

- o No provision stated.

V. FACULTY

Qualification/Assignment

- o The selection, development, and retention of a competent faculty at all instructional levels is of paramount importance to all institutions. The effectiveness of the total educational program is

determined in large measure by the relationship between faculty objectives and institutional mission and objectives. A well trained and oriented faculty who have had an opportunity to aid in the development of academic policies, who have a reasonable feeling of security in their positions, and who have adequate safeguards of their academic freedom, should be very effective in realizing the mission and objectives of the institution.

- Institutions commonly employ some part time faculty to achieve various purposes, but a core of full time instructional faculty with major professional commitment to the institutions and with appropriate professional qualifications for the programs offered is deemed essential.

- Provision should be made for adequate faculty participation in the development of institutional policies. The organization should provide regular and open channels of communications among faculty and between faculty and administration, and should be broadly representative of the faculty as a whole.

- (See VII. RESOURCES - Personnel.)

Faculty Load

- Careful attention must be paid to assigning a teacher a reasonable number of advisees in relation to his/her teaching, administrative and other responsibilities.

- Policies governing the amount of teaching allowed and overloads for full time faculty members from other units that are assigned to continuing education and special instructional activities should be developed and approved.

Faculty Development

- The continuous professional growth of all members of the faculty should be encouraged, and the institution should assist members of the faculty to further their professional development.

- Faculty members have a fundamental role in initiating research programs and in developing and monitoring institutional research policies and practices.

- Library and learning resources should provide instructional and faculty development functions, such as design and production of instructional materials and use of computer-based resources.

Faculty Evaluation

- In the final analysis, the performance of the faculty determines the educational quality of the institution. Each institution should provide for continuing evaluation of faculty performance and for equitable recognition of faculty effectiveness.

VI. GOVERNANCE

Relationship of Program to Institution

- (See II. CURRICULUM.)

Authority/Autonomy

- (See "Structure and Administration" which follows.)

Structure and Administration

- A first essential for a strong institution is a carefully planned administrative organization which coordinates all its resources effectively toward the accomplishment of the institutional mission and objectives.

- The governing board must have at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractural, employment, or personal financial interest in the institution. The board should act as a body politic. The board should have a clear idea of its general duties and responsibilities and should seek to define them in an official policy statement.

- Information available to all, as in faculty manuals or handbooks, should include the duties and responsibilities of the chief administrative officers, the pattern of faculty organization, provisions regarding tenure and advancement, and all policies and regulations that affect members of the faculty, the administrative staff or other college personnel.

Planning

- Thorough space utilization studies should be made to determine actual needs before the addition of new facilities.

- Provision must be made for periodic assessment of needs in order to provide responsive programming.

- Planning should include specific projections of income from each source, specific plans for major categories of expenditures, and plans for the increase and use of capital resources.

- Whenever an institution provides programs, it must demonstrate that library and learning resources services, fully adequate to the programs, are conveniently available and used by students and faculty.

VII. RESOURCES

Personnel

- Provision of an adequate and qualified faculty and staff to support these programs is essential to maintaining good academic quality. Full-time faculty and staff should be accorded the same recognition and benefits as other faculty and staff members of the institution. Adjunct faculty should meet the same standards as regular faculty and be given academic rank when appropriate. Recognition and service in these activities should be considered in the tenure and promotion evaluation of participating full-time faculty members. Policies governing the amount of teaching allowed, overloads, and compensation for full-time faculty members from other units assigned to these programs should be developed and approved jointly by the continuing education administrator and the appropriate academic administrator.

Fiscal

- The institution can document a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to carry out its stated mission and objectives within a balanced budget and a safe level of debt.

- In judging the adequacy of financial operations, basic educational and general expenditures for the fiscal year will be considered. Transfers and Auxiliary Enterprises will be considered separately. Encompassed here are research, public service, student services and all support costs. In computing the expenditure per student, the educational and general expenditure is divided by the number of full-time equivalent students.

- If federal and state examiners do not normally audit the institution, an annual audit with a certified report shall be made by competent accountants employing as a guide Audits of Colleges and Universities published by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

- Each institution should give evidence of the cultivation and utilization of a variety of sources of income so that the combination is adequate to its need.

- Financial planning for the future within each educational institution is a condition of wisely guided development. Planning should include specific projections of income from each source, specific plans for major categories of expenditures, and plans for the increase and use of capital resources.

- Complete endowment records should be maintained.

- Institutions should provide for adequate financial reserves in the absence of endowments to assure stability of income.

- The institution must demonstrate the adequacy of financial resources for the support of specialized occupational, technical and professional programs. When programs depend upon external funding, stability of this income must be evident or procedures must have been established to provide control in case of emergencies.

- The debt status of an institution is also a factor of stability. At least a three year history of the amount borrowed (whether internally or externally) for capital outlay and for operating funds shall be maintained. The amount of interest and principal paid on such debts, including a statement on operating income used in debt service, shall be maintained. Borrowing funds in significant amounts for current fund support to obtain stability is a questionable approach and should be thoroughly justified. Well developed and documented plans for repayment should be evident.

- As far as practical at each institution, all business and financial functions should be centralized, preferably under a single business officer responsible to the president.

- Member institutions should indicate fiscal resources adequate to support their offerings and should make available to the public a summary of their latest audited financial statement. In addition, proprietary institutions shall annually make available a financial summary which include as a minimum a list of company officers, a statement of profit and loss, expenditures, indebtedness, and companies which have a controlling interest in the institution.

- The accounting system should follow the generally accepted principles of institutional accounting as they appear in College and University Business Administration, published by the National Association of College and University Business Officers.

Facilities

- The physical facilities, including buildings, materials, equipment and campus should be designated and maintained to serve the needs of the institution in relations to its stated purposes.

- Facilities, materials, and equipment shall be provided at a level of quality which will support and enhance the educational philosophy, mission and objectives of the institution. Facilities shall be adequate to accommodate a satisfactory percentage of users in an inviting and efficient atmosphere. Materials shall have the depth and breadth appropriate for the achievement of the goals and objectives of the library and learning resources program. Equipment shall be available in sufficient variety and quantity to serve the needs of the users.

- At the minimum, institutional housing should provide a safe, clean, and reasonably convenient place for the student to live while enrolled in the institution. At the most, campus housing should actively complement the academic programs of the institution, serving as an active center for both formal and informal instruction.

- A collegiate institution or its students may operate a book store as a service to the institution and its student body. Complete stocks of required and recommended texts for all courses plus technical and reference books and study aids are needed. The book store should offer a reasonable selection in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and many titles in paperback books for inexpensive supplementary reading.

- Policies of the book store should be set by a board representing the administration, faculty and student body. Strict accounting of the operation should be the responsibility of the institution.

- In order to minister properly to the student's physical, mental and moral needs, the institution should have a well coordinated student program of extracurricular activities.

Library, Equipment, Supplies

- Services include providing convenient and comprehensive access to library and learning resources, assisting in effective utilization of the library and learning resources, providing instructional and faculty development functions, such as design and production of instructional materials, and use of computer-based resources.

- Items of laboratory equipment, instructional facilities, furnishings and expenditures therefore should be adequate to meet institutional needs.

- The library and learning resources program shall be administered as part of the instructional program by qualified professional staff, with representatives of the faculty acting in an advisory capacity.

- The purposes of a library and learning resources program is to support and improve instruction and learning in ways consistent with the philosophy and evolving curricular programs of the institution. Its goals and objectives must be compatible with and supportive of the institutional mission and objectives.

- It shall constitute a central support of the entire educational program and assist in the cultural development of students, faculty, and the community it serves. It shall be capable of supporting basic research, to the level of degrees offered. It shall provide services, resources, and facilities which encourage and stimulate such activities as individualization of instruction, independent study, innovation, effective use of resources, and community involvement.

- It has at least a core library and learning resources appropriate to its mission, and it provides access to specialized library and learning resources needed for independent work in the fields and at the levels represented by its offerings. If it depends in part on other institutions for specialized library and learning resources, it can demonstrate that they are adequate, easily accessible and used.

NAME OF ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION:	Commission on Colleges Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
MAILING ADDRESS:	1866 Southern Lane Decatur, GA 30033-4097
CONTACT:	(404) 329-6500
STANDARDS PUBLICATION:	Criteria for Accreditation (1989)

PROFILE: SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION: Commission on Colleges
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

I. ELIGIBILITY

General

- States served: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia; and in Latin America for those postsecondary degree-granting institutions that award degrees at any or all of the following levels: associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctorate.

- The Commission on Colleges is a representative body elected by the College Delegate Assembly and charged with carrying out the accreditation processes.

- Principle concerns in accreditation are the improvement of educational quality throughout the region and the assurance to the public that regional institutions meet established standards.

- Once each decade, colleges and universities holding membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools have conducted comprehensive self-examinations from which were formulated recommendations for future improvements.

- Conditions of Eligibility - Any institution seeking candidacy, membership or reaffirmation must document its compliance with each of the following 13 conditions of eligibility:

  1. The institution has attested in writing to its commitment to and intent to comply with the criteria of the College Delegate Assembly.

     The applying institution must also attest to its understanding and agreement that the Commission on Colleges may make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding status with the Commission.

     The institution agrees to disclose to the Commission on Colleges any and all such information as the Commission may require to carry out its evaluating and accrediting function.

  2. The institution has formal authority from an appropriate governmental agency to award degrees, certificates, or diplomas.

3. The institution has a governing board, consisting of at least five members, which has the authority to carry out the mission of the institution. A majority of the voting members must have no contractual, employment, familial, or personal financial interest in the institution.

4. The institution has a chief executive officer.

5. The institution is in operation and will have students enrolled in degree programs at the time of the committee visit.

6. The institution offers one or more degree program(s) based on at least two academic years at the associate level, at least four academic years at the baccalaureate level, or at least one academic year at the post-baccalaureate level.

7. The institution has a clearly defined and published statement of purpose.

8. The institution has published admission policies compatible with its stated purpose.

9. All undergraduate degree programs of the institution include a substantial component of liberal arts or general education courses at the postsecondary level. For degree completion in associate programs, the component must constitute a minimum of 15 semester hours or the equivalent quarter hours and for baccalaureate programs a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent quarter hours. The credit hours may be either a prerequisite or an essential element of those programs and are to be drawn from each of the following areas: the humanities/fine arts, the social/behavioral sciences, and the natural sciences/mathematics. The courses must not be narrowly focused on those skills, techniques, and procedures peculiar to a particular occupation or profession.

10. In each curricular area in which the institution offers a major in a degree program, there is at least one full-time faculty member with responsibility for oversight and coordination of that area.

11. The institution has a plan, as well as a planning and evaluation process, which addresses its educational, physical, and financial growth.

12. The institution owns sufficient learning resources or, through formal agreements, ensures the provision of and access to adequate learning resources and services required to support the courses, programs, and degrees offered.

13. The institution has established an adequate financial base and has available an audited financial statement made within the year prior to the committee visit. In addition, an institution seeking initial candidacy for membership, candidacy renewal, or initial membership must not show a cumulative operating deficit.

14. Any institution seeking initial membership (accreditation), in addition to fulfilling requirements outlined in ther Criteria, must document its compliance with all the Conditions of Eligibility and have been in operation, i.e., have without interruption enrolled students in degree programs, through at least one complete degree program cycle and have graduated at least one class at the level of the highest degree offered prior to action of the Committee on Criteria and Reports.

- Each institution must have a purpose appropriate to collegiate education as well as to its own specific educational role. This purpose must be stated clearly and concisely and must be published; it must represent the official posture and practice of the institution. The statement of purpose must address all components of an institution's purpose, including research and public service where these are significant institutional responsibilities. The integrity of the institution is measured not only by its stated purpose but also by its conscientious endeavor to fulfill this purpose.

- In order to participate in consortium degree or certificate programs, all institutions must be accredited by or be a candidate for accreditation with a regional accrediting association to offer credit work at the appropriate degree or certificate level. Any exception must be approved by the Commission.

Relationship Between Accreditation and Certification

- The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools does not certify individuals.

II. CURRICULUM

Overall Institutional

- Undergraduate Curriculum - The curricular offerings of an institution must be clearly and accurately described in published materials. Curricula must be directly related and appropriate to the purposes and goals of the institution, to the ability and preparation of the students admitted, and to the financial and instructional resources of the institution.

There must be a clearly defined process by which the curriculum is established, reviewed and evaluated. This process must recognize the various roles of the faculty, the administration and the governing board.

In each curricular area in which a major in a degree program is offered, the institution must assign responsibility for course or program oversight and coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field. At least one full-time faculty member with appropriate credentials, must have primary assignment in each such curricular area.

The administration and faculty are responsible for the development of proposed academic programs and recommendations for submission to the governing board. They are also responsible for implementing and monitoring the general curriculum policy and the academic programs approved by the board. There should be an institution-wide process to coordinate programmatic and curricular changes.

Undergraduate degree programs must contain a basic core of general education courses (For degree completion in associate programs, a minimum of 15 semester hours; in baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours.) The core must include at least one course from each of the following areas: the humanities or fine arts, the social or behavioral sciences, and the natural sciences or mathematics. Within this core, or in addition to it, the institution must provide components designed to ensure competence in reading, writing, and communication and fundamental mathematical skills. Because the computer is an important means of both communication and computation, institutions should provide basic computer instruction for their students.

In each degree program, there must be an orderly, identifiable sequence of courses leading to the degree. An adequate number of hours must be required in courses above the elementary level with appropriate prerequisites. The institution must clearly define what is meant by a major or an area of concentration and must state the minimum and maximum number of credits allowed for each. Provision must be made for electives chosen from disciplines outside the student's area of specialization.

Curricula intended to provide basic preparation for students who will subsequently transfer to another institution must be designed to consider the institutions to which these students transfer. Articulation agreements for upper division study should be developed and periodically evaluated to ensure an equitable and efficient transfer of students. "Inverted," "two plus two," and similar programs must include an adequate amount of advanced coursework in the subject field.

- Graduate Curriculum - An institution offering graduate work must be able to demonstrate that it maintains a substantial difference between undergraduate and graduate instruction. Graduate study must be at a level of complexity and generalization that extends the knowledge and intellectual maturity of the graduate student. Study must require graduate students to analyze, explore, question, reconsider and synthesize old and new knowledge and skills. The graduate curriculum must afford the depth of education, the specialized skills and the sense of creative independence that will allow the graduate to practice in and contribute to a profession or field of scholarship. Combined instruction of graduate and undergraduate students, if permitted at all, must be carefully controlled, so as to assure appropriate attention to both groups.

  An institution must recognize that there is a difference between a course of study leading to the master's degree and that leading to the doctorate.

  A program leading to a master's degree normally is the equivalent of at least one year of full-time graduate study. It must provide an understanding of research and the manner by which research is conducted. (A nonresearch-oriented professional master's degree requires an understanding of the accepted professional practices in the field.) It must also provide an understanding of the subject matter, bibliography, theory and methodology of the field; association with resident faculty sufficient to permit their individual evaluation of the candidate's capabilities; and demonstrated means of certifying the knowledge and skills which the candidate has acquired.

  A program leading to a doctoral degree is normally the equivalent of at least three years of full-time graduate study. In addition to the skills required of a master's candidate, it must require:

  - a period of residency after admission to the doctoral program;

  - substantial mastery of the subject matter, theory, bibliography, research and methodology of a significant part of the field, including any special language(s) or other skills necessary to its pursuit; and

  - independent research competence as evidenced by a doctoral dissertation. The dissertation should augment or reinterpret the knowledge of the field.

  A doctoral degree must also require appropriate and regular means for determining candidacy and the fulfillment of degree requirements.

Provision must be made for frequent systematic evaluation of graduate curricular offerings and program requirements and for the constructive integration of research with instruction.

- o A graduate program must have curricula and resources substantially beyond those provided by an undergraduate program.

Specialist Courses (Core Curriculum)

- o In certain professional, vocational and technical programs (for example, the allied health areas), appropriate clinical and other affiliations with outside agencies may be necessary. In all such cases, learning experiences for which credit is awarded must be under the ultimate control and supervision of the educational institution.

  For programs designed to prepare students for a specialized profession or occupation, the institution must demonstrate that an effective relationship exists between curricular content and current practices in the field of specialization.

Other Special Requirements

- o Undergraduate Instruction - Instructional techniques and policies must be in accord with the purposes of the institution, as well as appropriate to the specific goals of an individual course. Instruction must be evaluated regularly and evidence collected to demonstrate that efforts are being made to improve instruction.

  Students and faculty must have a clear understanding of the goals and requirements of each course, the nature of the course content and the methods of evaluation to be employed. Methods of instruction must help fulfill the goals of each course and be appropriate to the capabilities of the students. Experimentation with methods to improve instruction must be adequately supported and critically evaluated.

  The evaluation of students must reflect concern for quality and properly discern levels of student performance.

  The effectiveness of instruction must be periodically studied. The institution should evaluate the effectiveness of its instructional program by a variety of techniques which may include:

  - the use of standardized tests and comprehensive examinations;
  - the assessment of the performance of graduates in advanced programs or employment; and
  - the sampling of the opinions of former students.

Courses offered in non-traditional formats (e.g., concentrated or abbreviated time periods) must be designed to ensure an opportunity for reflection and analysis of the subject matter. The institution must demonstrate that students completing these programs or courses have the opportunity to acquire comparable levels of knowledge and competencies as in similar programs offered in more traditional time periods.

- Graduate Instruction - The institution must provide an environment which supports and encourages scholarly interaction and accessibility among the faculty and students.

  Instructional methods and delivery systems must provide students with the opportunity to achieve the stated objectives of the course or program.

  Courses offered in non-traditional formats (e.g., concentrated or abbreviated time periods) must be designed to ensure an opportunity for reflection and analysis of the subject matter.

  There must be provision for assigning students to their directors, appointing their graduate committees, and monitoring their academic progress.

  Provision must be made for systematic and frequent evaluation of graduate instruction and for the revision of the instructional process based on the results of this evaluation.

- An institution must not award credit for work taken on a non-credit basis.

- All continuing educaiton programs, both credit and non-credit, must be evaluated regularly.

III. RELATIONSHIP TO WORLD OF PRACTICE

Clinical and Field Based Experience

- (See "Specialist Courses" on page SA-6.)

Follow-up of Graduates

- Institutions should ascertain periodically the change in the academic achievement of their students. Procedures used to evaluate instructional programs may include:

  - Peer evaluation of educational programs;

  - Structured interviews with students and graduates;

  - Pre- and post-testing of students;

- Surveys of recent graduates;
- Surveys of employers of graduates;
- Performances of graduates in graduate school;
- Performance of graduates of professional programs on licensure examinations; and
- Placement of graduates of occupational programs in positions related to their fields of preparation.

Relationship with Field

- o No provisions stated.

IV. STUDENTS

Admission

- o The principle focus of the total institution must be the education of students. All aspects of the educational program must be clearly related to the purpose of the institution. The institution must demonstrate the comparable quality of its educational programs for all students. The student enrollment and the financial resources of the institution must be sufficient to support an effective educational program. Policies and procedures of admission, curricular requirements for graduation, instructional methods and procedures, and the quality of student work required must be consistent with the institutional purpose.

- o Undergraduate Admission - The admission policies of an institution must be clearly stated, published and made available to all constituencies, including potential students. Each institution regularly must evaluate its admission policies.

  The admission policies must be related to the educational purposes of the institution. They must establish such qualitative and quantitative requirements so as to admit students who demonstrate reasonable potential for success.

  In the absence of such requirements, an institution must offer appropriate developmental or remedial support to assist students in overcoming deficiencies in their preparation for collegiate study. Diagnostic testing can be an important element of a developmental or remedial program.

  The unit responsible for administering the policies must be clearly identified. In those institutions where various subdivisions

maintain separate admission requirements, there must be provision for institution-wide coordination of all admission policies and procedures.

To be admitted to degree programs, students must show evidence of high school graduation or other successful experiences which demonstrate their ability to make satisfactory progress at a particular institution. Each institution must assess the appropriateness of experiences offered in lieu of a high school diploma and must justify any deviations.

An institution must clearly define and publish its policy on the admission of transfer students which must include the following:

- The requirement of official transcripts of all postsecondary credits previously earned;
- Qualitative and quantitative limitations determining the acceptability of transfer work;
- Criteria regarding the granting of advanced standing, whether by credit earned at another institution, by advanced placement examinations or through experiential learning; and
- Conditions governing admission in good standing, admission on probation and provisional admission.

The institution must inform transfer students of the amount of credit which will transfer, preferably prior to their enrollment, but at the latest prior to the end of the first academic term in which they are enrolled.

When an institution grants credit based on advanced placement examinations, other examinations such as CLEP, training obtained through the armed forces and service schools, professional certification, or for experiential learning, it must state clearly all conditions governing the granting of this credit. The amount of credit granted on these bases must be in accordance with commonly accepted good practice in higher education (e.g., "ACE Guidelines") and must be appropriately related to the student's course of study. The documentation and evaluation of such learning must include an assessment of the relationship of the learning to the student's current educational goals, the means by which the experience was evaluated and the amount of credit to be granted. The evaluation process and criteria for determining experiential learning must be valid and clearly described.

There must be clearly defined policies regarding the academic dismissal, suspension and readmission of students. The readmission of students dismissed or suspended for academic reasons must be consistent with the academic policies of the institution.

The procedures established for implementation of the institutional admission policies must be followed in the admission of all students. The institution must provide evidence that it selects students whose interests and capabilities are consistent with the admission policies.

Provisions must be made for publicizing both the general criteria for admission and any special admission criteria for individual programs.

- Graduate Admission - An institution should base its graduate admission policies on two considerations:

  1. That the focus of graduate programs is generally on the development of teachers, scholars and researchers; and

  2. That in certain professionally-oriented programs, in which research is not a major component, the focus is on exceptionally high performance.

  The institution must establish qualitative and quantitative requirements which result in the admission of students whose educational preparation evidences the potential for a high level of performance. Admission criteria for all graduate programs must be published. Admission procedures must include the requirement that applicants submit, as part of the formal application process, official undergraduate transcripts, and other appropriate documents, such as, official reports on nationally recognized aptitude tests and evaluations by professionals in their field as to the readiness of an applicant for graduate work. When possible, interviews with the applicants should also be arranged.

  Separate admission criteria must be formulated for each level of graduate work offered. Policies must clearly define probation or conditional admission, if any, including the requirements for conditional admission and how long a student may remain in such status.

  Admission criteria for each graduate program must be established with representation by the faculty responsible for instruction in that program. Provisions must be made for publicizing both the general criteria for admission and any special admission criteria for individual programs.

Monitoring - Assessment/Competencies

- The institution must define its expected educational results and describe how the achievement of these results will be ascertained.

- Institutions should ascertain periodically the change in the academic achievement of their students:
  - Peer evaluation of educational programs;
  - Structured interviews with students;
  - Changes in students' values as measured by standard instruments or self-reported behavior patterns;
  - Pre- and post-testing of students;
  - Students scores on standardized examinations or locally conducted examinations.
- Completion requirements for an associate or baccalaureate degree must include competence in reading, writing, oral communications and fundamental mathematical skills.

Advisory Services

- Student development services are essential to the achievement of the educational goals of the institution and should contribute to the cultural, social, moral, intellectual and physical development of students. To ensure effectiveness, goals for the student services program must be developed which are consistent with the student's needs and the purposes of the institution. Appropriate student development services must be provided for off-campus programs.

  Student development services should be given organizational status commensurate with other major administrative areas within the institution. These services must be staffed by individuals who have training and experience consistent with their assignments.

  Academic Advising, Counseling and Career Development - The academic advising of students must be an institutional responsibility of high priority. Each institution must provide the organizational structure and resources necessary to conduct an effective program of academic advisement.

Completion of Program/Evaluation - Exit Criteria

- Undergraduate Completion Requirements - An institution must state the requirements for each certificate and degree it awards. The statement of requirements must specify:
  - The number and distribution of general education credits to be completed;
  - The minimum and maximum credits to be earned in the major or areas of concentration;

- The total credits which must be earned; and

- The competencies which students must acquire in order to receive each certificate or degree.

In addition, for degree completion in associate programs, at least 15 semester hours or the equivalent quarter hours and, for baccalaureate programs, a minimum of 30 semester hours or the equivalent quarter hours must be earned through instruction offered by the institution granting the degree. Completion requirements for an associated or baccalaureate degree must include competence in reading, writing, oral communications and fundamental mathematical skills.

o Graduate Completion Requirements - The administration and faculty must be responsible for the development of proposed academic programs to be recommended to the governing board. General completion requirements for the graduate degree(s) offered by an institution are determined by the faculty or by an appropriate body representing the faculty. Policies governing these completion requirements must include the following:

- The specified period of time in which the degree must be completed;

- Requirements governing residency;

- Thesis and dissertation requirements (when applicable);

- The minimum number of credit hours required for the degree;

- The minimum acceptable grade-point average;

- The level of academic progress at which the student should apply for candidacy; and

- The types of qualifying and exit examination(s) which the candidate must pass.

These requirements, along with any others developed by the institution, must be published and distributed to all incoming graduate students. If individual academic units develop special completion requirements for their graduate programs, these units must publicize in the official catalog or bulletin, a statement concerning these requirements.

Multicultural Groups and Persons with Disabilities

o No provisions stated.

V. FACULTY

Qualification/Assignment

- Institutions offering degree programs at off-campus locations must meet all criteria related to facility.

- An institution must show that it has an orderly process for recruiting and appointing its faculty. This process will normally involve the development of a pool of qualified candidates and the interviewing of those who appear to be the best qualified. This procedure must be described in the faculty handbook or other published documents.

- An institution must adopt and distribute to all members of the faculty a statement of the principles of academic freedom as established by the governing board, assuring freedom in teaching, research and publication. Each institution must provide contracts, letters of appointment or similar documents to the faculty clearly describing the terms and conditions of their employment. All policies regarding employment must be published and distributed to the faculty. Termination and non-renewal procedures must contain adequate safeguards for protection of academic freedom.

- A satisfactory program of faculty compensation must include annual review of all salaries, based on clearly stated criteria for salary increments.

- The number of part time faculty must be properly controlled.

- Part-time faculty teaching courses for credit must meet the same requirements for professional, experiential and scholarly preparation as their full-time counterparts teaching in the same disciplines.

  Each institution must establish and publish comprehensive policies concerning the employment of part-time faculty. The institution must also provide for appropriate orientation, supervision and evaluation of all part-time faculty.

- Institutions must determine that the applicant's proficiency in oral communication in the language in which the course(s) is being taught is such that t he appointment is appropriate.

- Both full- and part-time faculty must meet the following criteria for scholarly and professional preparation:

  - Baccalaureate - All full-time and part-time faculty teaching at the baccalaureate degree level in each of the following areas - humanities and the fine arts, social and behavioral

sciences, natural sciences and mathematics, business administration and education (other than physical education activities courses) - must have completed 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching fields and hold a master's degree. Forty (40) percent of the course credit hours taught above the associate degree level in each of these areas must be taught by faculty members holding the terminal degree, usually the earned doctorate, in their teaching fields.

In each discipline in which an undergraduate major is offered, at least twenty-five (25) percent of the course credit hours taught must be taught by faculty members holding the terminal degree, usually an earned doctorate, in that discipline.

In professional and technical fields, where job experience may be more valuable than academic preparation, where training and experience other than graduate study may provide excellent preparation for college teaching, an institution may employ faculty members who do not hold the terminal degree. It is the responsibility of the institution to keep on file, documentation of work experience, certifications and other qualifications if these are to substitute for or supplement formal academic preparation.

Faculty who teach in remedial programs must have a bachelor's degree in a field related to their teaching assignment AND either classroom experience in a field related to their teaching assignment or graduate training in remedial education.

- Graduate - Institutions offering the master's degree must demonstrate a high level of faculty competence in the fields in which the master's programs are provided. Additionally, institutions offering the programs leading to such degrees as the traditional doctor of philosophy must demonstrate significant research capability of the faculty teaching in these programs as well as high faculty competence.

All institutions must have adequate resources to attract and retain a qualified faculty, especially in the fields in which doctoral programs are offered. Faculty teaching graduate level courses must hold the highest earned degree in their disciplines, although in some cases experience and or scholarly or creative activity may substitute for the doctorate. Faculty responsible for the direction of doctoral research must be experienced in directing independent study.

An effective graduate program depends on the scholarly interaction of faculty whose specialities are complementary. The number of faculty required varies with the discipline(s) and the scope of the program. The minimum numbers of graduate faculty are:

- Master's degree - four full-time faculty members in the subject field (may include related disciplines);

- Doctor's degree - four full-time members whose scholarly fields are interdependent and directly relevant to the candidate's doctoral program.

Eligibility requirements for faculty teaching graduate courses must be clearly defined and published.

Faculty Load

o An institution must provide a faculty of adequate size to support its instructional program and must have a plan for the equitable and reasonable assignment of faculty responsibilities - including classroom instruction, academic advising, committee membership, guidance of student organizations, and research and service to the public.

Faculty Development

o An institution must provide faculty members the opportunity to continue their professional development throughout their careers and must demonstrate that such development takes place. Among the means of accomplishing this goal are leaves of absence for study and research, additional graduate work in the discipline, attendance at professional meetings, and in-service training such as instruction in computer usage.

Faculty Evaluation

o An institution must conduct periodic evaluations of the performance of individual faculty members. The evaluation must include a statement of the criteria against which the performance of the individual faculty members will be measured. These criteria must be made known to all concerned. The institution must provide guidelines for the use of the results of this evaluation for the improvement of the faculty and the educational program.

VI. GOVERNANCE

Relationship of Program to Institution

o The institutional administrative organization must reflect the purpose and philosophy of the institution and enable each functional unit to perform its particular responsibilities as defined by the stated purpose of the institution.

o Administrative responsibility and authority for all educational offerings and functions of the institution must be clearly

identified, and each institution must develop and publish an organizational chart delineating clearly the lines of responsibility and authority in the institution.

Authority/Autonomy

- There must be a clear distinction, in writing and in practice, between the policy-making functions of the governing board and the responsibility of the administration and faculty to administer and implement policy.

- (See "Structure and Administration" which follows.)

Structure and Administration

- The organizational structure and the administrative processes must be well defined, published and made available to the college community.

- The duties of the chief executive officer of the institution, and other administrative officials directly responsible to the chief executive, must be clearly defined and made known to faculty and staff. Administrative officers must possess credentials, experience and/or demonstrated competence appropriate to their areas of responsibility.

- Although the title and function of governing boards vary, there must be a clearly identifiable body which is responsible for policy-making. The governing board is the legal body responsible for the institution, which it holds in trust. Board action must result from a decision of the whole.

- The duties and responsibilities of the governing board must be clearly defined in an official document. This document must also specify: the number of members, length of service, rotation policies, organization and committee structure, and frequency of meetings. There must be appropriate continuity in the board membership, usually provided by staggered terms of adequate length.

- The governing board is responsible for approving the number and types of degrees; the number and nature of departments, divisions, schools or colleges through which the curriculum is administered; and the extent to which the institution should offer graduate work and off-campus programs. These decisions may also be subject to review and approval by a designated state agency prior to implementation.

- The governing board must not be subject to undue pressure from political, religious or other external bodies.

Planning

- o The institution must establish adequate procedures for planning and evaluation.

- o The institution must define its expected educational results and describe how the achievement of these results will be ascertained. Although no specific format for this planning and evaluation process is prescribed, an effective process should include:

  - Broad-based involvement of faculty and administration;

  - The establishment of a clearly defined purpose appropriate to collegiate education;

  - The formulation of educational goals consistent with the institution's purpose;

  - The development of procedures for evaluating the extent to which these educational goals are being achieved; and

  - The use of the results of these evaluations to improve institutional effectiveness.

- o An institution must prepare an appropriately detailed annual budget. Its preparation and execution must be preceded by sound educational planning.

- o The institution must maintain in writing a current facilities mAster plan that provides for the future orderly development of the institution.

- o Institutions with research or public service missions must develop and implement appropriate procedures for evaluating their effectiveness in these areas.

- o All institutions, however, must engage in continuous study analysis and appraisal of their purposes, policies, procedures and programs.

VII. RESOURCES

Personnel

- o An institution must provide for its graduate programs a competent and productive faculty, the library, computer, and laboratory facilities adequate to support them, and an adequate administrative organization.

Fiscal

- Because the financial resources of an institution determine, in part, the quality of its educational program, each institution must possess sufficient financial resources to support all of its programs. There must be a budget control system. Necessary budget revisions must be made when actual conditions require such changes and must be communicated.

- All business and financial functions of the institution should be centralized under a chief business officer reporting to the chief executive officer. The chief executive officer must report regularly to the governing board on the financial and business operations of the institution.

- An institution must adopt an accounting system that follows the generally accepted principles of institutional accounting as they appear in College and University Business Administration, published by the National Association of College and University Business Officers.

Facilities

- The institution must provide competent faculty, adequate library and appropriate computer resources, instructional materials/equipment and physical facilities to support its educational program.

- To support its curriculum, each institution must provide a variety of facilities and instructional support services (e.g., educational equipment and specialized facilities such as laboratories, audiovisual and duplicating services, and learning skills center).

- Computer services are essential to many educational programs and should also be available to support the institution's management and administrative functions. The administration must establish priorities for computer usage and must balance the services provided among the user groups.

- The library must have adequate physical facilities to house, service and make the library collections easily available.

- Space allocated to any institutional function must be adequate for the effective conduct of that function.

- An institution must develop a plan for the upkeep of its property: the routine maintenance, preventive maintenance and, where appropriate, deferred maintenance of buildings, equipment and grounds (including utility distribution and regularly recurring repairs).

- The institution must provide a healthful, safe and secure environment for all members of the campus community.

- The institution must maintain in writing a current facilities master plan that provides for the future orderly development of the institution.

Library, Equipment, Supplies

- Each institution must ensure that all students and faculty have access to the primary and secondary materials needed to support its purposes and programs. These resources should be available in a well-equipped, readily accessible facility of adequate size which encourages maximum use by the campus community. To facilitate use of such resources, a competent staff must be available to assist the users. The collections of print and non-print materials must be well organized, and adequate hours must be maintained to ensure accessibility to users.

- Priorities for acquiring materials and establishing services must be determined with the needs of the users in mind. Thus, with the active cooperation of the administration, faculty, students and library staff, each institution must develop for its library a mission statement consistent with the institutional purpose. The library must be evaluated regularly and systematically to ensure that it is meeting the needs of its users and supporting the programs and purpose of the institution.

- Basic library services must include an orientation program designed to teach new users how to obtain individual assistance, access to bibliographic information, and access to materials.

- The library must provide adequate records of materials through catalogs, indexes and bibliographies; access of information sources, regardless of location, through standard indexes and bibliographies; and, where appropriate, access to external bibliographic databases.

- The library must have adequate physical facilities to house, service and make the library collections easily available; up-to-date equipment in good condition for using print and non-print materials; provision for rapid access to any remotely stored materials; provision for interlibrary loan agreements; and an efficient and appropriate circulation system. Librarians must work cooperatively with the teaching faculty in assisting to use resource materials effectively.

- The library collections and databases must be sufficient to support the educational, research and public service programs of the institution.

- Each library must have a policy governing the principles of selection and weeding.
- The library must be adequately staffed by professional librarians who hold professional degrees at the graduate level in library science or learning resources.
- The chief librarian must be a well-qualified professional whose administration of library services contributes to the educational effectiveness of the institution.
- The library support staff must be adequate to carry out the responsibilities of a technical nature.
- At any off-campus location where credit courses are offered, an institution must ensure the provision of and access to adequate learning resources and services required to support the courses, programs, and degrees offered.

NAME OF ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION:	Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities Western Association of Schools and Colleges
MAILING ADDRESS:	P.O. Box 9990 Mills College Oakland, CA 94613-0990
CONTACT:	(415) 632-5000
STANDARDS PUBLICATION:	Handbook of Accreditation (January 1988)

PROFILE: WESTERN ASSOCIATION: Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

I. ELIGIBILITY

General

- States served: California, Guam, and other geographical areas in which the Commission now conduct accrediting activities.

- An institution of higher education is, by definition, dedicated to the search for truth and its dissemination. As a consequence, faculty, students, administrators, trustees, and staff are committed to and supported in the free pursuit of knowledge and the expression of ideas.

- Academic freedom does not require neutrality. Institutions may endorse particular religious or philosophical beliefs, or specific social principles. Nonetheless, the protection of the freedom for faculty and students to examine all pertinent data, to question assumptions, to be guided by the evidence of scholarly research, and to teach and study the substance of a given field is crucial to the integrity of an educational institution.

- Through its policies and practices, the institution encourages individual autonomy and fosters educational diversity. Adequate provision is made to ensure academic honesty and to protect basic due process and privacy rights for students, faculty, and staff.

- Representations about the institution to prospective students and to the general public are accurate and consistent with institutional publications and practices.

- In its relationships with the Commission, the institution demonstrates honesty and integrity, and agrees to comply with Commission standards, policies, guidelines, and self-study requirements. The institution is responsive to Commission decisions and requests.

- The institution is guided by clearly stated purposes that define its character, are appropriate for higher education, and are consistent with Commission standards.

- The institution has developed the means for evaluating how well, and in what ways, it is accomplishing its purposes as the basis for broad-based, continuous planning and evaluation.

- Research and scholarship are present in the work of faculty and students at all institutions and are particularly evident in institutions granting graduate degrees; research, scholarship, and instruction are integrated and regarded as mutually supportive.

- Public service, when offered, is consistent with the educational purposes of the institution.

- The institution supports a co-curricular environment that fosters the intellectual and personal development of students. That supportive environment is characterized by a concern for the welfare of all students, on- and off-campus; a commitment to student academic and self-development; a conscious attention to ethnic, socioeconomic, and religious diversity consistent with institutional purposes; a responsiveness to the special needs of a diverse student body; a regard for the rights and responsibilities of students; and an active understanding of the interdependence of the elements of the learning environment.

Relationship Between Accreditation and Certification

- The Western Association of Schools and Colleges does not certify individuals.

II. CURRICULUM

Overall Institutional

- Academic planning is designed to achieve the aims of the institution and provides the rationale for the projected use of both currently available and future human, financial, and physical resources. This systematic planning is based on continuing institutional self-evaluation and assessment of the needs of the institution's constituencies. All appropriate segments of the institution are involved in planning

- The undergraduate program is designed to give students a substantial, coherent, and articulated exposure to the major, broad domains of higher education.

- Undergraduate studies as a whole have a clear rationale, and the three segments, General Education, the Major, and Electives, articulate in such ways as to reflect that rationale. The undergraduate program, as a whole, is characterized by clarity and order, characteristics which are visible in model curricula in official bulletins, and also in student records of actual programs pursued.

- Graduate and professional programs offer conceptually well designed programs of study which are guided by appropriate and well defined

educational objectives, and are supported by sufficient resources to ensure a sophisticated mastery of a complex field of study or a professional area.

- o Objectives, policies, requirements, degree nomenclature and resources are appropriate to the several levels and types of graduate and professional degrees offered: disciplinary Master's, professional Master's, professional Doctorate, and research Doctorate.

- o Graduate study necessarily entails greater depth, sophistication and mastery than is required for undergraduate learning: adequate provision is made in terms of:

  - Student applicant qualifications and selection;
  - Curricular design;
  - Assessment of student academic work;
  - Faculty preparation and competence;
  - Financial support for instruction;
  - Laboratory and field research support;
  - Clinical and field supervision; and
  - Library and computing resources.

- o Professionally-oriented programs have curricula which build upon the foundation of basic theory and/or science appropriate to that profession, prepare students to be critical consumers of the research relevant to the profession, and provide for the sequential development of professional skills.

- o Responsibility for design, approval, and implementation of the curriculum is vested in designated bodies with clearly established channels of communication and control. The faculty has the major role in design and implementation of the curriculum.

- o Human, financial, and physical resources are allocated on the basis of academic program needs and objectives, and are consistent with the academic plans.

- o The institution engages in periodic review of program and departmental quality under clearly specified and demonstrably implemented procedures. This process is based on current qualitative and quantitative data which attempt to assess strengths and weaknesses in achieving program purposes and projected outcomes.

- In setting the pattern for general education, an institution specifies the minimum number of general education units to be required for all undergraduate students working toward any bachelor's degree.

- General education is integrated with the entire undergraduate program and includes offerings at the upper division level.

- The institution has clearly articulated policies for the transfer of credit to ensure that students who transfer in with general education course credits meet its own standards for the completion of the general education requirement. Where patterns of transfer from specific community and junior colleges are established, efforts are undertaken to formulate articulation agreements regarding general education.

- The equivalent of two years of study toward the baccalaureate degree will be in general education and unrestricted electives even if this extends the basic program. Institutions which offer programs that do not meet this standard bear the burden of proof that the tripartite goals of the baccalaureate are otherwise met.

- Research policies and practices are developed and administered cooperatively by faculty and administration. These policies are clearly communicated throughout the institution.

- Research-oriented programs, whether at the Master's or Doctoral level, have a curriculum which enables both the scholarly mastery of a field of learning, and a sequential development of research skills. Library, computing, and other learning resources necessary to support the extensive and in-depth research activities of faculty and students are provided.

- Graduate programs provide carefully designed and sensitively monitored curricula and educational experiences appropriate to the level and orientation of the degree.

Specialist Courses (Core Curriculum)

- The structure and goals of all educational programs (including special programs and courses) are consistent with institutional purposes. They are developed, approved, administered, and periodically reviewed under established institutional policies and procedures through a clearly defined process.

- In each field of study, degree objectives are clearly specified: the subject matter to be covered; the intellectual skills and learning methods to be acquired; the affective and creative capabilities to be developed; and, if relevant, the specific career-preparation practices to be mastered.

Other Special Requirements

- The achievement and maintenance of quality programs is the primary responsibility of every accredited institution; hence, the evaluation of educational programs and their continuous improvement is an ongoing responsibility. As it analyzes its goals and discovers how conditions and needs change, the institution continually redefines for itself the elements that will result in programs of high quality.

- Credit for prior experiential learning is offered only at the undergraduate level.

- Non-credit courses are administered under appropriate institutional policies and procedures. Campus administrators and faculty are involved in planning, administering, and evaluating non-credit courses.

- All off-campus and other special programs providing academic credit are integral parts of the institution and maintain the same academic standards as regular campus programs. Their functions, goals, and objectives are consonant with those of the institution and lead to academic accomplishments at least equal to those attained by traditional practices. The institution maintains direct quality and fiscal control on all aspects of all programs and provides adequate resources to maintain this quality. The institution follows the Commission's special requirements for institutional reporting.

III. RELATIONSHIP TO WORLD OF PRACTICE

Clinical and Field Based Experience

- Field study, training programs, and other practica bear a clear and necessary relationship to the theoretical and other conceptual aspects of the Doctoral program.

Follow-up of Graduates

- Statements and promises can be documented, especially those regarding excellence of program, success in placement, and achievements of graduates or faculty.

Relationship with Field

- No provisions stated.

IV. STUDENTS

Admission

- Standards for admission at each level, including provisions for exceptional cases, are based upon norms of expectation generally recognized in higher education, and are consistent with the institution's educational purposes.

- Admission and retention policies and procedures are clear, available to all students, and carefully observed by the institution. Particular attention is paid to the application of sound admission and retention policies for athletes, international students, and other cases where unusual pressures may be anticipated.

- Admission to both master's and doctoral programs involves special screening, with high eligibility requirements in the latter case. Admitted students have a baccalaureate degree and evidence of capacity for graduate work. Professional schools, while customarily requiring the baccalaureate degree for admission, may, in some fields, accept undergraduates with advanced standing. Exceptions are fully justified and documented.

Monitoring - Assessment/Competencies

- Procedures and measures used to evaluate instructional programs may include:

  - Changes in students' academic achievement;
  - Peer evaluation of educational programs;
  - Structured interviews with students and graduates;
  - Changes in students' values as measured by standard instruments or self-reported behavior patterns;
  - Pre- and post-testing of students;
  - Surveys of recent graduates;
  - Surveys of employers of graduates;
  - Student scores on standardized examinations or locally constructed examinations;
  - Performance of graduates in graduate school;
  - Performance of graduates of professional programs on licensure examinations; or the
  - Placement of graduates of occupational programs in positions related to their fields of preparation.

Advisory Services

- Academic advisement is provided to ensure that student educational goals are correlated with the curricula offered.
- Systematic program of academic advisement assists students in making appropriate academic decisions.
- Whenever the institution admits groups of students with special needs (e.g., international students, disabled students, reentry students) or identifies a group which may have unique needs, there are adequate academic support and enrichment services to meet the special needs of these students.
- Advising procedures are designed and maintained to meet student needs for information and advice. Faculty and other personnel responsible for academic advising are adequately informed and prepared to discharge their advising functions.
- Career development counseling and placement services are consistent with student needs and institutional purposes.

V. FACULTY

Qualification/Assignment

- Explicit and equitable faculty personnel policies and procedures are published, accessible, and implemented.
- Explicit criteria for faculty appointment, retention, advancement, termination, and due process are well publicized, appropriately administered, and periodically reviewed.
- All faculty selection (full- and part-time, on- and off-campus), is based on criteria and procedures which are clearly stated, widely disseminated, and directly related to program and institutional purposes. Care is taken to avoid overdependence on graduates of any one institution.
- Members of the faculty are qualified by academic background, degree, and professional experience to carry out their program and institutional responsibilities in accord with the purposes of the institution.
- The institution selects students, faculty, administration, and staff according to institutionally developed and published non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and affirmative action policies.
- The role of faculty in institutional governance is both substantial and clearly defined.

Faculty Load

- Full-time faculty are adequate in number and sufficiently diversified in discipline so as to provide effective teaching, advising, and scholarly or creative activity; as well as to participate appropriately in curriculum development, policy making, institutional planning, and governance.

- Criteria for determining faculty workloads are stated clearly and developed in consultation with faculty members. All workload factors are considered, e.g., mode and level of instruction, class size, number of preparations, contact hours, off-campus teaching and supervision, student advising, available support services, time engaged in research and faculty development, and other institutional assignments.

- A sufficient number of full-time faculty are available to support all undergraduate programs. The number of full-time faculty is proportionate to the type and range of degree offered and the number of students served.

Faculty Development

- Appropriate opportunity is provided for professional staff development.

- Faculty workloads reflect the purposes of the institution and the talents of faculty, allowing sufficient time for professional growth and renewal.

Faculty Evaluation

- Scholarship, research productivity, and service to the academic or professional communities are among criteria used for evaluating faculty for appointment, promotion, and tenure. In Ph.D. granting institutions, these criteria take cognizance of the extent to which each faculty member's productivity and service are recognized by peers outside the institution.

- Evaluation of all faculty is systematic, is conducted at stated intervals, includes peer and (where appropriate) student evaluation. Teaching effectiveness is a significant criterion in the evaluation of instructional faculty. Follow-up of faculty evaluation is formal, systematic, and timely.

VI. GOVERNANCE

Relationship of Program to Institution

- (See "Structure and Administration" - board responsibilities which follows.)

Authority/Autonomy

- (See "Structure and Administration" which follows.)

Structure and Administration

- The governing board is ultimately responsible for the quality and integrity of the institution. It selects a chief executive officer, approves the purposes of the institution, and concerns itself with the provision of adequate funds. It establishes broad institutional policies, and delegates to the faculty and administration responsibility to administer and implement these policies. The board protects the institution from external pressures antithetical to academic freedom, to institutional autonomy, or to integrity. It differentiates among roles and responsibilities of various persons or bodies, and provides stability and continuity to the institution through an organized system of institutional planning and evaluation.

- The administration is organized and staffed to reflect institutional purposes, size, and complexity, and to provide economical and efficient management. Administrative organization, roles, and responsibilities are defined clearly. The chief executive officer's full-time responsibility is to the institution.

- After appropriate consultation, the board selects and regularly evaluates the institution's chief executive officer.

- The responsibilities of the governing board include securing financial resources to support adequately the institutional goals.

- The board approves and ensures compliance with basic institutional policies, including personnel policies. It approves substantive changes in institutional purposes, policies, and programs.

- The institution manages its administrative operations, including all of its finances, with honesty and integrity.

Planning

- The institution has a clearly specified and implemented academic planning process that culminates in written statements that are regularly updated. These written statements are well publicized to the appropriate constituencies.

- The institution uses the results of ongoing planning processes in further planning and evaluation.
- The planning process identifies issues and establishes priorities in addressing them.
- The planning process is participatory, involving as appropriate, the board, administration, faculty, and students.
- The human, financial and physical resources of the institution are integrated in the planning process.
- Appropriate evaluation mechanisms for all major components of the institution are utilized in planning.
- The relationship between institutional purposes and institutional programs is clear, and is reflected in long-range planning for both on- and off-campus instruction.
- Institutional planning recognizes the need for service linkages among complementary resource bases (e.g., libraries, computer centers, learning resource centers).
- The staff is engaged in planning for the future development of the co-curricular program. Planning includes attention to staffing, facilities, demographic characteristics of the student body, and assessment and fulfillment of student needs.
- The master planning for campus physical development is consistent with the purposes of the institution and its long-range academic planning.
- Physical facilities development and major renovation planning is accompanied by planning for the acquisition or allocation of the required capital and operating funds.

VII. RESOURCES

Personnel

- Administrative, professional, technical, and other staff are sufficient in number and qualified by training and experience to enable the accomplishment of institutional purposes.
- The institution provides a clear statement of institutional policies, requirements, and expectations to current and prospective employees.

- The institution selects students, faculty administration, and staff according to institutionally developed and published non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and affirmative action policies.

- Administrators are qualified to provide effective educational leadership and management. Access is provided for professional development. The institution determines and implements specific ways to evaluate its administrators.

- Explicit procedures and criteria for staff appointment, retention, evaluation, advancement, termination, and due process are published, accessible to all staff, and periodically reviewed.

- Professional staffs with appropriate expertise are available to assist users of the library, computer center, and other learning resources.

- The professional staff has the training and experience necessary to implement the educational goals of the co-curriculum and is committed to the purposes of the institution.

- Financial personnel have appropriate training and experience, and are committed to the educational purposes of the institution.

Fiscal

- Financial resources are sufficient to achieve, maintain, and enhance the objectives of the institution at the level of quality required by these accreditation standards. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of financial viability and institutional improvement.

- The commitment of resources among the various degrees and programs, undergraduate and graduate, reflects appropriately the educational objectives and priorities of the institution.

- The continuity of each area of institutional income has been realistically assessed such that the current and anticipated total income is sufficient to maintain the educational quality of the institution.

- The financial statements indicate a history of financial stability. The institution has operated for at least three previous years without incurring operating losses. If an accumulated deficit has been recorded, a realistic plan to eliminate the deficit is clearly presented, understood, and approved by the governing board.

- The management and organization of financial administration are clearly defined, with specific assignment of responsibilities appropriately set forth.

- The institution has clearly defined and implemented policies with regard to cash management and investments. These policies have been approved by the governing board.

- Financial reports and related documents are accurate and appropriately represent the total operations of the institution, including fundraising activities.

- All fundraising activities are governed by institutional policies, and comply with sound ethical accounting and financial principles.

- The institution has an annual budget and the policies, guidelines, and processes for developing the budget are clearly defined and followed.

- Annual budgets and long-range forecasts or budget plans reflect realistic assessments of resource availability and expenditure requirements for academic priorities and support needs.

- The short- and long-range capital budgets reflect educational objectives and relate to the plans for physical facilities.

Facilities

- Athletic program objectives are to be published, clearly understood, and faithfully used as a guide for action. They are to be consistent with the aims of the institution and with the fundamental purposes of higher education. Their emphasis should be primarily upon the welfare of the participants, and secondarily, on the benefit to the institution.

- Professional health care, including psychological health and relevant health education, is readily available to residential students, and to others, as appropriate.

- Student housing, if provided, is designed and operated to enhance the learning environment. It meets recognized standards of health and safety, and is competently staffed.

- Appropriate food services are provided for both resident and non-resident students. These services are supervised by professionally trained food service staff and meet recognized health and safety standards.

- Information and learning resources, including the holdings and any equipment needed to access the holdings of libraries, media centers, computer centers and any other repositories, are sufficient to support institutional offerings at appropriate levels.

- Facilities assigned to a function are adequate for the effective operation of that function.

- Offices and other facilities for faculty provide the elements needed for them to conduct properly their various instructional, research, counseling, and administrative responsibilities.

- All physical facilities include the furniture, equipment, utilities, and other amenities needed for a proper work and study environment for faculty, staff, and students.

- An appropriate level of routine and preventive maintenance on buildings and grounds is provided.

Library, Equipment, Supplies

- Basic library collections, learning resources, and equipment are held by the institution to support all degree programs. Library usage is required in all undergraduate degree programs.

- The curriculum is supported by appropriate learning resources.

- Learning resources are readily accessible to all students and faculty.

- Special equipment, software, or telecommunications necessary for access to learning resources are regularly available to students and faculty in appropriate type, number, and quality.

- Basic collections held by the institution are sufficient in quality and quantity to meet substantially all the needs of the educational program on- and off-campus.

- The library facilities accommodate the collections, readers, and staff so as to foster an atmosphere of inquiry, study, and learning.

- Collections are structured in direct relationship to the nature and level of curricular offerings, and they include adequate holdings in non-book materials as appropriate.

- Annual budget allocations for acquisitions provide sufficient learning resources to support degree programs.

- A variety of computing resources (e.g., professional support staff, hardware, software, and, as appropriate, network access on-and off-campus to databases and computing resources) supports the instructional and research needs of students and faculty.

- The institution provides adequate computer support services (including consulting, documentation, and software) to meet academic needs.

- The size of the central library structure and other decentralized units, as required, is adequate and appropriate to the nature of academic programs, student enrollment, the size and character of the collections, the specialized equipment, and the size of the staff.

- Adequate space is provided for immediate growth and plans have been laid for the future. As new technology is adopted for library functions and services, adequate space is provided for equipment.

- Suitable equipment is provided and is readily accessible at on- and off-campus sites to meet faculty, administrative staff, and student needs.

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